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REVIEWS

Heredity in Relation to Eugenics. By CHARLES BENEDICT DAVENPORT. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1911. Pp. xi+298. \$2.00.

Since it was clearly the author's purpose to write a book which should be socially serviceable, if not wholly satisfactory to the scientist, it is fitting that the reviewer deal with it as a contribution to the literature of race improvement, not as a monograph on heredity.

The heart of the volume is a chapter on "The Inheritance of Family Traits" in which almost one hundred characteristics of men are considered as inheritances. Both physical and mental, and both normal and abnormal, traits are represented. Eye color, hair color, skin color, musical ability, memory, temperament, general mental ability, epilepsy, insanity, criminality, night-blindness, color-blindness, deaf-mutism, cretinism, gout, polydactylism appear in the list.

The materials of the chapter have been obtained chiefly from the records of family traits which are on file at the Eugenics Record Office, Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island. In most instances, reports concerning the appearance or degree of development of a trait in several hundred individuals and from a score to a hundred or more families have been used as a basis for the discussion of the heritability of characteristics, for conclusions, and for recommendations concerning marriage.

The author's intent in presenting this mass of material, much of which strikes the reviewer as of uncertain value, is clearly indicated by the opening paragraph of the chapter:

Before any advice can be given to young persons about the marriage that would secure them the healthiest, strongest children, it will be necessary to know not only the peculiarities of their germ plasms but also the way in which various characters are inherited. The work of the student of eugenics is, consequently, to discover the methods of inheritance of each characteristic or trait. After we get precise knowledge of the methods of inheritance of the commoner important traits we shall be in a position to advise, at least, in respect to these traits. It would seem a self-evident proposition, but it is one too little regarded, that knowledge should precede teaching. In this chapter an attempt will be made to consider many of the traits that are known

to run in families and to set forth, so far as known, the laws of their inheritance. We shall begin with some of the general characteristics of man that have been best studied and then pass to a consideration of some human diseases [p. 26].

The accounts of the various human traits are of extremely different value, because of the number and nature of the records which were available. Whereas, in the case of eye color, the facts are convincing, the statements concerning memory are of relatively little value. It is, further, evident that many of the characteristics discussed are extremely complex. Among these might be mentioned artistic composition, literary composition, calculating ability, memory, temperament, general mental ability.

The discussion of each of the scores of traits leads up to a "eugenic conclusion" or recommendation concerning fit marriages. In certain instances, these recommendations are very definite; in others, the author states that our knowledge is insufficient to justify any recommendation. Concerning Huntington's chorea (St. Vitus' dance) we are told that "the eugenic lesson is that persons with this dire disease *should not have children*. But the members of normal branches derived from the affected strain are immune from the disease" (p. 102). Of rheumatism, it is stated that "the exact laws of inheritance in these cases are not clear and eugenic instruction cannot be drawn from them" (p. 105). Turning to defects of the eye, we find under pigmentary degeneration of the retina (*retinitis pigmentosa*) the following unequivocal statements: "The eugenic instruction is clear. An affected man or woman should not marry even into stock without taint of retinitis. Above all, in retinitis stock, cousins, especially if affected, should by no means marry" (p. 118). And the eugenic conclusion concerning color-blindness is "that while color-blind males will have no color-blind sons, and, typically, no color-blind offspring of either sex, yet their daughters, married to men of normal stock, will have color-blind sons" (p. 120).

To consider the data of Dr. Davenport's chapter on "The Inheritance of Family Traits" apart from his purpose in presenting the materials at this particular time and in the setting which this book gives them, would be extremely unfair to the author as well as to the eugenic movement. For, although it is evident that the family records which are available at Cold Spring Harbor contain invaluable information concerning certain human traits, it is equally clear that they offer meager and inconclusive evidence concerning many of the characters which are discussed in this volume. A specialist in the study of heredity

is sure to be unfavorably impressed by the book unless he keeps constantly in mind the author's purpose.

Introductory to the chapter on "The Inheritance of Family Traits" are two chapters. In the first, eugenics is defined, its nature indicated, and its general procedure suggested. This chapter is brief but not very effective. The second chapter, under the title "The Method of Eugenics," presents still less satisfactorily, in the opinion of the reviewer, an account of the mechanism of heredity, of its laws, and of the application of these laws to eugenics.

At the beginning of this chapter, the author partially reveals his motive.

To get at the facts [of human heredity] it is necessary to study the progeny of human marriages. Now marriage can be and is looked at from many points of view: in novels, as the climax of human courtship; in law, largely as a union of two lines of property-descent; in society, as fixing a certain status; but in eugenics, which considers its biological aspect, marriage is an experiment in breeding; and the children, in their varied combinations of characters, give the result of the experiment. That marriage should still be only an *experiment* in breeding, while the breeding of many animals and plants has been reduced to a science, is ground for reproach. Surely the human product is superior to that of poultry; and as we may now predict with precision the characters of the offspring of a particular pair of pedigreed poultry so may it sometime be with man. As we now know how to make almost any desired combination of characters of guinea-pigs, chickens, wheats, and cottons so may we hope to do with man [p. 7].

It is unfortunate that the introductory discussion of the nature, aims, and methods of eugenics should not be more readable. Possibly it is because the author's mental pattern is extremely different from the reviewer's that the latter finds chap. ii both uninteresting and difficult to follow. Certainly an account of the mechanism of heredity is important for this book and should be adapted to the unbiological reader.

Turning to the latter portion of the book, we find six chapters which together contain less pages (90) than the single chapter on "The Inheritance of Family Traits." These several chapters bear the titles "The Geographic Distribution of Inheritable Traits," "Migrations and Their Eugenic Significance," "The Influence of the Individual on the Race," "The Study of American Families," "Eugenics and Euthenics," and "The Organization of Applied Eugenics."

In considering the relation of geographic distribution to heredity, the author discusses the effects of consanguinity in marriage and of physiographic and social barriers. Important among the former are

water and topography; among the latter, social status, language, race, and religion.

The chapter which deals with migration in its relations to eugenics briefly characterizes the primitive, early, and recent migrations and immigrations. An attempt is then made to characterize the races which are today contributing to the stream of immigrants to America. In the list are included Irish, Germans, Scandinavians, Austro-Hungarians, Hebrews, Italians, Poles, and Portuguese.

Summarizing his review of recent conditions of immigration, Dr. Davenport writes:

It appears that, unless conditions change of themselves or are radically changed, the population of the United States will, on account of the great influx of blood from southeastern Europe, rapidly become darker in pigmentation, smaller in stature, more mercurial, more attached to music and art, more given to crimes of larceny, kidnaping, assault, murder, rape, and sex-immorality and less given to burglary, drunkenness, and vagrancy than were the original English settlers. Since of the insane in hospitals there are relatively more foreign-born than native it seems probable that, under present conditions, the ratio of insanity in the population will rapidly increase [p. 921].

Under the topic "Control of Immigration," a plan for the gathering of eugenic facts is proposed. It provides that fieldworkers, distributed over the world, shall investigate the family history of every applicant for naturalization in the United States. The estimated annual cost of this work is \$510,000, but, as the author remarks, "compared with the annual expenditure of over \$100,000,000 in this country to take care of our defectives this amount seems small and would be well invested, for, within a decade, the annual saving to our institutions would pay for the work" (p. 223).

The influence of the individual on the race is interestingly exhibited by an account of Elizabeth Tuttle, the first families of Virginia, the Kentucky aristocracy, the Jukes, the Ishmaelites, and the Baker family.

In the chapter on "The Study of American Families," the author lays special stress upon the integrity of family traits. He thus characterizes the idea that our traits are inherited in constantly diminishing degree from parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.

This way of looking at heredity is a relic of a former view that a trait when mated to its absence produced a half-trait in the progeny as skin color was considered to do, and which gave rise to the conception of quadroons, octaroons, etc., with successive lightening of the skin to one fourth, one eighth, and so on. Now that we know that even skin color may segregate out in the

ancestral full grades we are ready to accept as practically universal the rule that unit characters do not blend; that apparent blends in a trait are a consequence of its composition out of many units. Since this is so, a unit character (especially a negative character) which a remote ancestor possessed may reappear, after many generations have passed, in its pristine purity. A germ plasm that produced a mathematical genius only once, a century ago, may produce another not less noteworthy again [p. 249].

Not until the reader comes to the chapter on "Eugenics and Euthenics" does he find a suggestion of the possible influence of environment on man. Possibly the author has done well to keep heredity in the foreground instead of confusing the reader by admitting that we cannot be absolutely certain whether a given trait, or condition of trait, is due to nature, to nurture, or in part to each. However this may be, chap. viii makes it perfectly clear that the author is not blind to environmental influences. Perhaps he underestimates their rôle; possibly he overestimates the applicability of the laws of heredity upon which he bases his eugenic recommendations. At any rate, it is inevitable that a reader who turns from such a book as Thomson's *Heredity* to Davenport's *Heredity in Its Relation to Eugenics* will deem the latter one-sided, possibly even unfair to the facts now well established.

Extremely important to the advocate of eugenic measures is the concluding chapter, in which the author strongly urges the desirability of eugenic surveys. He suggests that state surveys to provide us with adequate information concerning families might be made by the teachers of our public schools and he meets objection that this is impracticable by the statement that, in the state of New Jersey, such a survey is being conducted by state institutions and largely on the basis of individual initiative. So far as the reviewer knows, the teachers of the state have not been employed generally or systematically in the gathering of data.

Finally, attention is called to the existence, at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, of a eugenics record office in which are being accumulated and filed, for convenient examination and safe keeping, the family histories, and other materials bearing on human heredity, which can be obtained through individuals or institutions. The office supplies blanks for a record of family traits and, also, for special traits as they appear in a number of generations. This office has the additional functions which are indicated by the concluding sentences of *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*:

The Eugenics Record Office wishes to co-operate with institutions and state boards of control in organizing the study of defectives and criminalistic

strains in each state. It will offer suggestions as to the organization of local societies devoted to the study of eugenics. It proffers its services free of charge to persons seeking advice as to the consequences of proposed marriage matings. In a word, it is devoted to the advancement of the science and practice of Eugenics [p. 271].

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Penal Servitude. By E. STAGG WHITIN. New York: National Committee on Prison Labor, 1912.

The title of the book indicates the point of attack on the contract system of prison labor. The preface expresses the hope that the campaign against this system will be continued "until it can be said with truth that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, not even as a punishment for crime, exists within the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction." By "servitude" the author seems to mean a condition in which the labor of the prisoner is exploited to his detriment for the advantage of contractors. He surely cannot mean that a convict is to be left in entire freedom, on an equality with law-abiding citizens, or that he is to be permitted to remain idle if he is unwilling to work. He declares that "the status of the convict is that of one in penal servitude—the last surviving vestige of the old slave system." Whether this epithet helps to an understanding of the subject each reader must judge for himself; certain it is that no substitute for enforced labor is proposed by the author; and it is also certain that, so long as a man is deprived of freedom as punishment for crime, or for his own reformation, or for social protection, it will seem to him very much like "involuntary servitude," no matter what novel name is found for the situation. The book does give convincing evidence that penalty should be economically administered, that by probation and parole the time of incarceration should be shortened as much as possible, consistent with justice; but for some, so far as we can now see, involuntary labor will remain necessary.

Dr. Whitin urges (p. 8) that it is the duty of the state to provide labor for all convicts, labor which will not compete with free labor; and that the prisoner should "return to the state the full amount of his cost to it, and support his wife and children." Perhaps he would add indemnity for damages to the parties injured. It is the duty of the state to do what is possible in this direction, but duty does not include the impossible. What should be included in cost to the state? The cost of police, courts, prison buildings, administration, or the indi-